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## Celebrating the Milestones of Faith: Putting God's Faithfulness Front and Center

Calvin Symposium on Worship: Word, Music, Vision, Action

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# **Celebrating the Milestones of Faith: Putting God's Faithfulness Front and Center**

**Laura and Robert Keeley**

## **What are Faith Milestones?**

Milestones are markers on a person's life of faith.

- Faith Milestones celebrate events in the individual's life in the context of faith community.
- Milestones help us form a deeper intimacy with God and a greater dependence on God's grace.
- A Milestone is not a single event
- Multiple Milestones events might more deeply engage the people of all ages in a life of discipleship.
- Milestones demonstrate God's presence, purpose, and calling in every area of life.
- Ultimately Milestones are about God's faithfulness and not personal achievements.

## **Faith is a life long journey**

## **Why milestones now?**

- Concerns for 20's and 30's
- Society has changed
- Increased mobility
- Technology – isolates us – increases generation gap
- Milestones help us recognize that the Christian life is not something you "achieve."
- Reinforce the home/church connection
- Passing on faith in Community
- Milestones are Scriptural. Joshua 4:21-24

## Getting Started

- Understand what faith milestones can be
- Look at your church culture
- Pick out what you already do
- Make them formal, consistent and institutionalized
- Then, look at your gaps – what are you missing?
- What are the objectives?
  - Intentionally mark times in a person’s life where God’s faithfulness is celebrated

## Guidelines

1. Name it.
2. Celebrate at significant church gatherings.
3. Include everyone.
4. Engage in faith talk.
5. Mark the occasion with a small gift.

## Examples and Ideas

## Resources

### Faith Milestones

*Celebrating the Milestones of Faith: A Guide for Churches*, Laura Keeley and Robert J. Keeley, Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2009.

*The Child in our Hands: Milestones Worship Celebrations*, Lee Hovel, Youth and Family Institute, 1999. [www.youthandfamilyinstitute.org](http://www.youthandfamilyinstitute.org)

“From Confirmation or Profession of Faith to Multiple Milestones of Faith”, Joan Huyser-Honing, Calvin Institute of Christian Worship website:

[http://www.calvin.edu/worship/stories/profession\\_faith.php](http://www.calvin.edu/worship/stories/profession_faith.php)

“For All Generations: Princeton Christian Reformed Church, Kentwood, Michigan”, Nathan Bierma, *Reformed Worship* #77, p. 28

“Marking Passages: How the church can celebrate stages in a member’s life”, William R. Miller, *Reformed Worship* #32, p. 24

“Stones from the River”, Laura Keeley, *Reformed Worship*, #92, p.8

### Faith Formation

Faith Formation Committee of the Christian Reformed Church of North America.

<http://www.crcna.org/faithformation>

*Frogs With Legs Can’t Hear: Nurturing Disciples In Home And Congregation*, David Anderson and Paul Hill, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2003.

*Growing in the Life of Faith: Education and Christian Practices*, second edition, Craig Dykstra. Westminster John Knox Press, 2005.

*Helping our Children Grow in Faith; How the Church Can Nurture the Spiritual Development of Kids*, Robert J. Keeley, Baker Books, 2008.

Lifelong Faith: Promoting Faith Growth For All Ages and Generations.

[www.lifelongfaith.com](http://www.lifelongfaith.com)

*Making a Home for Faith: Nurturing the Spiritual Life of Your Children*, Elizabeth Caldwell, Pilgrim Press, 2007.

*Passing on the Faith: A Radical New Model for Youth and Family Ministry*, second edition Merton P. Strommen and Richard A. Hardel, Saint Mary’s Press, 2008.

*Real Kids, Real Faith: Practices for Nurturing Children’s Spiritual Lives*, Karen Marie Yust, Jossey-Bass, 2004.

Vibrant Faith Ministries formerly known as Youth and Family Institute.

[www.youthandfamilyinstitute.org](http://www.youthandfamilyinstitute.org)

*Walk On: The Year of Faith Formation Resource Book*, Laura Keeley, Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2006. [www.crcna.org/ACRE](http://www.crcna.org/ACRE)

### Milestone Ministry Programs

*Faith Legacy Series: Helping Families Grow Spiritually*, Kids Kount Publishing, <http://www.kidskountpublishing.com>

*Wrapped in God’s Love - A Milestone Ministry Resource: Planting Seeds of Faith, Growing Generous Hearts*, ed by Barbara Fullerton, Rick Hiebert, Annemarie Klassen, and Jeff Steckley, Mennonite Church Canada Formation, 2003.

*Milestones Ministry Manual for Home and Congregation*, Youth and Family Institute, 2007.